

**EDUCATION, OUTREACH &
PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE
FINAL REPORT**

**Prepared for the
Water Allocation Program Advisory Committee (WAPAC)
of the RI Water Resources Board**

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A. Purpose of the Committee

The committee will make recommendations in terms of conservation education, outreach or public relations initiatives for the water allocation program. The committee will also coordinate and disseminate information to legislators, water users and the public in an appropriate form.

B. Mission Statement

Carry out an education, outreach and public relations program promoting long-range conservation and use of the water resources of the state. Pay particular attention to the needs of local municipalities, water supply districts, and constituencies most likely to be affected by a water allocation program. Develop and implement a public relations campaign that results in the support of the water management program recommended by WAPAC.)

C. Goals and Outcomes

1. Develop an introduction to the Water Allocation Program

The committee decided that a brief introductory piece should be written that would describe the efforts of the Water Allocation effort and solicit additional participation from the committees. A short piece was developed by the committee and circulated through email list serves. The piece also ran in the RI Dept. of Administration-Statewide Planning Division E-Newsletter, RI Coastal Resources Management Council's printed newsletter, the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association's newsletter and in the Providence Journal. New people joined the committees as a result of this introductory piece

2. Determine ways to disseminate information

A website was designed in partnership with RI Sea Grant and the Water Resources Board for posting of information related to the development of Rhode Island's water allocation program. Agendas, meeting minutes and background materials for all of the committees were posted on the web site. The site provides the public with information on the water allocation program as it evolves. WAPAC member organizations were asked to link their organizational web sites to this site.

The committee discussed the possibility of having a letter or a brochure included in water bills. The committee reviewed a brochure that had been developed by the Water/Wastewater Committee. The consensus was that the brochure provided information about the need to conserve water; it did not include specific action that could be taken to conserve. The committee agreed that a first step would be to develop customized brochures for entities that use large

amounts of water such as golf courses, nurseries, municipal governments and facilities that use water for industrial cooling. These brochures should include specific means of conservation or resources that they could contact for assistance in conserving water. The committee identified URI's Home*A*Syst program which is run by the Cooperative Extension as a potential way to disseminate conservation messages and perform community outreach.

3. Preparation of a media strategy

The committee sought to obtain a public relations professional to prepare a media strategy. One of the committee members compiled a list of freelance journalists and another member agreed to contact them to ask how much they would charge to come up with a media strategy. The one estimate that was received was a writer for the Providence Journal who would charge \$50/hour. In the absence of any funds available to the committee, a media strategy cannot be prepared. Funding a media strategy is one of the four top recommendations of this committee.

4. Package goals and objectives of all WAPAC committees to educate legislators, water users and the general public. Develop an outline of a public relations message for the WAPAC.

The committee prepared an overview of the basic elements necessary for a public relations message and education needs. When the Education Committee receives the recommendations of other WAPAC committees, it will put together a message that is clear, concise (three major points) and consistent.) The committee recognizes that water allocation and conservation messages may be better received during drought years such as 1999 and 2002. Since 2003 was an unusually wet year, the overall message may be that water supply is variable. Therefore, it must be appropriately managed.

5. Pursued Public Relations Opportunities that did not require funding

The Education Committee explored opportunities for acquiring public relations assistance. Committee members discussed the need for complete coverage of the issue with Peter Lord, the environmental journalist for the Providence Journal. An intern serving at the Providence Journal funded by the Metcalf Institute for Marine and Environmental Reporting was contacted and encouraged to write about water issues. A presentation was given to the Assoc. of Conservation Districts to explore their support for outreach activities. Board staff presented before the Northern RI Chamber of Commerce and at a workshop sponsored by the RI Rivers Council.

6. Conduct research on Water Allocation educational programs in other states

The committee conducted research on education and outreach programs in other states with regard to water allocation. Programs in the New England states, New Jersey, and California were explored. In general, it was found that programs specific to water allocation are rare, however many states, through existing Cooperative Extension programs, addressed water conservation as an educational topic. In addition, programs were found to exist for elementary and secondary school students, particularly in the State of California. New England Cooperative Extension Resources offers a variety of public educational vehicles accessible online, often associated with land grant institutions. Several of these are centered on drought issues, and homeowner best management practices. The US Geological Survey also provides state-specific drought information pages. In addition, numerous federal government agencies provide national-scale resources regarding drought, climate, and agriculture-related topics. For its part, New Jersey sponsors a website and a drought hotline to serve its residents. The state's Department of Environmental Protection also sponsors drought public meetings where staff members share information and answer questions. Moreover, in Sacramento California, the non-profit Water Education Foundation aims to help resolve water resource problems through educational programs. These programs include curricula for elementary, secondary, and college students, some involving nationally adapted programs such as Project WET.

7. Develop ideas for stories on water allocation and conservation

The committee agreed that several ideas should be developed that would have some associated visuals and potential marketability to the press. The proposed stories were: Healthy Landscapes in North Kingstown (growth versus water availability and the use of groundwater for lawn watering; the issue of water availability for fire-fighting (not having enough water could be a safety issue and/or matching water quality with water use); using treated wastewater to irrigate municipal golf courses with the Jamestown course being an example.

8. Identify potential sources of funding for education and outreach

A student intern working for the committee researched grant programs that could be used to fund water allocation outreach and other activities related to the allocation program. A directory of grant programs was developed and distributed to the committee and other partners. A member of the committee attended a grant meeting hosted by the RI Foundation. She learned that the foundation offers "mini" grants (\$5000) on a monthly basis, as well as larger, strategic planning grants that are typically awarded to nonprofit groups. Other suggestions for potential funding sources were water bottling companies or corporations.

9. Obtain funding for education, public outreach and conservation

The Committee prepared and submitted a grant to the US EPA to fund a special edition of *The Water Front* magazine devoted to the topic of water supply and allocation. A grant proposal was also submitted to Citizens Bank; however, neither proposal was funded.

10. Rain barrel program

The committee worked with New England Rain Barrel Company on a rain barrel distribution program for 2004. URI Cooperative Extension staff participated in program discussions. The distribution program could be designed to complement the "Healthy Landscapes" program currently being pilot-tested by URI in North Kingstown. RI Resource Recovery Corp. offered to assist in event coordinate in tandem with its hazardous waste pick up program across the state.

D. Interface with the Joint Advocacy & Funding Committee

The purpose of the Joint Advocacy & Funding Committee is to advocate for the recommendations of the WAPAC including legislation, and to obtain funding. The Education Committee lead met with the chair of the Joint Advocacy and Funding Committee and agreed to prioritize the retention of funds for the Water Resources Board that will be coming in from fees over the next 3 years. Some of these funds can go toward the further development of education about water allocation and conservation. A small working group that would include a representative from the House, Senate and Governor's office would work on the state budget requirements to retain this funding.

E. Overall Recommendations

Financial resources must be made available over the long term for education to be successful. The top four recommendations are:

1. Hire a public relations professional to prepare a comprehensive media strategy.
2. Prepare and package materials for the Governor and the RI General Assembly.
3. Promote, establish and coordinate conservation programs regarding efficient use of water. Ideally, efforts will be timed with significant, statewide environmental observances.
 - Ex: provide discounted rain barrels, rain gauges, and/or automatic sprinkler sensors to the public.
 - Work with vendors regarding price incentives for water efficient fixtures and appliances.
4. In addition to public presentations, continue to use list serves, linked web pages and other electronic and print media to keep the public informed.

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Matrix of WAPAC Educational Messages**
- Appendix 2: Breakout of P.R. and Training Groups “Messages”**
- Appendix 3: Steps for the WAPAC Media Strategy**
- Appendix 4: Program Activities Timeline**
- Appendix 5: Grant List**
- Appendix 6: USEPA Grant Application**

WATER ALLOCATION PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
July 24, 2003

Water Allocation Committee	Education Message	Education Message
Water Use Reporting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where do we get water from, how do we use it and where does it go? (Consider lost water) 2. How can water-use reporting help support sustainable growth of the State? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Raise public and legislative awareness and understanding of hydrology (both surface and ground water). 4. Increase availability and “flow” of information from the state to municipalities and the public.
Stream Flow Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raise public awareness of water issues in general <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Runoff, infiltration, buffer zones • Competition for water • Stressed basins • Sustainable watersheds- NEWWA conference in planning stages 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Educate the legislature regarding the need for data (stream gages, observation wells) 3. Targeted education/outreach and technical assistance through the Cooperative Extension and others to educate/train local decision makers
Priority Uses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What uses are priority? 2. What uses are preferred? 3. What does “reasonable” use mean? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. What uses are exempted during times of water shortage?
Water Rights/Regulatory Authority	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding the Regulatory Authority Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target audiences: the public, legislators, ABA-RI, municipal government • Interactive web tool or brochure for diagrams, laws, regulations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Water Rights: Who owns the water? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of rights (common law, state law, concept of reasonable use) 3. Information for private well owners 4. Promote stewardship by all water users
Out-of-Basin Transfer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is Out-of-Basin Transport? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and Wastewater 2. What are the potential environmental, economic and social impacts of moving water out of basins? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphically depict conveyances 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Build awareness regarding water availability in context with local land use decisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constituencies include: planners, local officials, developers, consultants, land use attorneys and watershed councils • Training in regional planning • Changes in zoning and subdivision regs
Water Rates, Fees & Alternatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the cost of the full cycle of water? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicly-supplied water and wastewater • Self-supply (private wells) • Making sense of water bills 2. The importance of conservation messages 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Educate the suppliers; standardize bills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide electronic template for suppliers • Use bill stuffers or brochures like the CCR • Add conservation messages on bills, water use statistics, best management practices,

	Ex: every dollar saved in water represents savings to dispose of it	etc.
Integrated Water/Wastewater	1. What is recycled or reclaimed water? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Package in a brochure for businesses and industry and show examples/explain benefits Optional demonstration projects for local or state-owned/financed properties, large private companies, golf courses, and residential developments. Examples: State House, Quonset/Davisville, URI's new biotechnology center and campus, Amgen, Fidelity 	2. What are the health effects of using recycled or reclaimed water? 3. What kind of technical assistance is available and how much would it cost? 4. Educate local building inspectors, planners and developers regarding what is possible, especially with older buildings.
Education and Public Relations	1. How would water allocation affect families, businesses, etc.? 2. What are lessons learned in the rest of the world? 3. "Three barks" 4. Harness the power of consumer choice in favor of conservation.	5. Blend consumer education and advocacy with market incentives and disincentives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market mechanisms Eco-labels 6. Educate the legislature about measures needed to avoid allocating water in the future.
Impact Analyses	1. Understand the system interactions between water supply, land development, the environment and the well being of Rhode Islanders	2. How can the system be managed to maximize positive economic, social and environmental impacts?
Joint Advocacy & Funding	1. Analysis of water resource management spending by [state] entity and category	2. Strategies for funding and pooling resources to implement water allocation program priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Price programs Nonprice programs

BREAKOUT OF P.R. AND TRAINING FROM GROUPS' "MESSAGES"

Public Relations Messages

Basic question:

Where do we get water from, how do we use it and where does it go?

Key questions:

(These beg the question of "Who decides?" Nationally and internationally a looming question, balancing government versus social concerns. Do people prioritize, does government do so by fiat?):

- **How can the system be managed to maximize positive economic, social and environmental impacts?**
- **What uses are priority?**
- **What uses are preferred?**
- **How much water do we lose, and how?**

- What uses are exempted during times of water shortage, and why?
- Water Rights: Who owns the water?
 - Summary of rights (common law, state law, concept of reasonable use)
- What is the cost of the full cycle of water?
 - Publicly-supplied water and wastewater
 - Self-supply (private wells)
 - Making sense of water bills
- The importance of conservation messages
 - Example: every dollar saved in water represents savings to **dispose** of it (*Key word is dispose. If water is so valuable, why are we disposing of it?*)
- What is recycled or reclaimed water?
- Understand the system interactions between water supply, land development, the environment and the well being of Rhode Islanders

Basics for Ed and P.R. Committee:

How would water allocation affect families, businesses, etc.? Answer "So what?"

What are lessons learned in the rest of the world?

"Three barks" and "Three Cs" – Messages clear, concise, and consistent

Other thoughts:

Harness the power of consumer choice in favor of conservation.

Blend consumer education and advocacy with market incentives and disincentives.

- Market mechanisms
- Eco-labels

Education and Training Needs

- **Educate the suppliers; standardize bills**
 - **Provide electronic template for suppliers** (Suggestion here for p.r. side to devise a simplified bill to visibly contrast with current unintelligible, non-uniform bills to give legislators to show how it could all be much easier to understand if it were law to have standard template.)
 - **Use bill stuffers or brochures like the CCR**
 - **Add conservation messages on bills, water use statistics, best management practices, etc.**
- **Educate the legislature about measures needed to avoid allocating water in the future**
- Raise public and legislative awareness and understanding of hydrology (both surface and ground water).
- Targeted education/outreach and technical assistance through the Cooperative Extension and others to educate/train local decision makers
- Understanding the Regulatory Authority Process
 - Target audiences: the public, legislators, ABA-RI, municipal government
 - Interactive web tool or brochure for diagrams, laws, regulations
- Build awareness regarding water availability in context with local land use decisions
 - Constituencies include: planners, local officials, developers, consultants, land use attorneys and watershed councils
 - Training in regional planning
 - Changes in zoning and subdivision regs

Data-gathering subset

(On PR side, need to explain why this data matters in practical terms to justify costs. Example: If not enough gauges on Pawtuxet River, homeowners in between monitoring points may not know if water quality is up to par.)

- How can water-use reporting help support sustainable growth of the state?
- Educate the legislature regarding the need for data (stream gages, observation wells)

In-House WA work to do:

- Analysis of water resource management spending by [state] entity and category
- Strategies for funding and pooling resources to implement water allocation program priorities
 - Price programs
 - Nonprice programs

STEPS FOR WAPAC MEDIA STRATEGY

October 20, 2003

This document is a preliminary draft laying out our steps for a media strategy for the Water Allocation Program. This is contingent on honing down our messages, obtaining funding and drafting legislation, the first two of which can begin immediately.

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY ELEMENTS

IDENTIFY PROJECT COMMUNICATIONS STAFF AND SPOKESPERSON (Now)

- Who is responsible for media strategy (CY with PS/CMcG/SW)
- Need a contact person (Sams/McGreavy)
 - Always available
 - Information resource for media

IDENTIFY RESOURCES - FINANCIAL & HUMAN (Now)

- What's the budget? (CY/Printed materials)
- Who will do the fundraising work? (Joint Advocacy Committee. Who else?)

DEVELOP A MESSAGE (By November 15)

- Prioritize goals/messages. (Need background on what appears can fly an legislation in General Assembly. SW – House; Payne – Senate.)
- The 3 C's - Clear, Concise, Consistent
- The 3 "Barks"

CREATE OUTREACH MATERIALS (By December 1)

- Basic, simple brochure
- Introductory letter explaining goals (no more than two pages – TOPS)
- Tailor letter to target audiences – just slight adjustments, have to be consistent in what we are saying and we are asking for.

DEVELOP CORE GROUPS FOR OUTREACH (By December 1)

(There should one statewide heavy-hitter core group for General Assembly, and each local group doing outreach on their community programs/activities that tie to bigger program should also form one on same lines.)

- Community leader
- Business sector leader (e.g., Chamber of Commerce head)
- Government representative
- Environmental community
- Media representative (?)
- Funder(s) representative

These people will need to be trained and backgrounded on message and legislation. Remember, they are volunteers and one must be conscious of time and work demands put on them. These people will need to meet with both media and legislators.

RESEARCH AND IDENTIFY OPPOSING ARGUMENTS (Now and ongoing)

- Who opposes our priorities and legislation? (Begin to ID right now)
- Why are we right and they wrong?
- Preemptive strike

IDENTIFY TARGET AUDIENCES AND TAILOR MESSAGE TO THEIR NEEDS (November 1 on)

- Public/Media
- Business sector
- Community/social services/educational sector
- Government (State/Local)

IDENTIFY “EXTERNAL” SPOKESPEOPLE (By December 1)

- Not directly involved with the team (Grow Smart board member?)
- Community leader and neighbor
- High visibility and credibility
- Knows issues cold and is articulate
- Contrarian (?)

CREATE AN ACTION TIMELINE (Start now)

- What are you going to do? Why?
- Evaluate training needs versus outreach needs
- Short-term actions/Long-term strategy

IDENTIFY MORE PUBLIC INFO VEHICLES/OUTLETS (Ongoing)

- Flyer
- Brochure
- Posters
- Video
- WWW
- Other (Billboards, T-shirts, etc.)

IDENTIFY KEY LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION DISSEMINATION (Ongoing)

- Local knowledge
- Neighbors and friends

SET UP A DATABASE OF PEOPLE AND ORGS. (Now and ongoing)

- Create foundation for communication flow

BACKGROUND LOCAL MEDIA (When messages set and legislation is ready)

- What are you doing here?
- Answer questions and rebut arguments in advance
 - Seek input and support via coverage and editorials, not necessarily right at that moment

IDENTIFY ANNOUNCEMENT DATE/KICKOFF EVENT

- Time to go public
- Press conference (?)
- Date, place, “hook”
- Press release
- Pre-brief participants and invitees - rehearsal

ANNOUNCE NEXT STEPS

- What are you going to do? You are getting things done.
- What do you want public to do?

OPINION/EDITORIAL PIECE FOR LOCAL PAPER

- Your message in your own words
- Signed by respected and prominent local member of core group to build credibility and identify with public

DISSEMINATE MEDIA COVERAGE

- Look at what we’re doing! Outside validation of work
- Database
- Funders
- Government officials/decision-maker

[illegible]

**EDUCATING MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS, WATERSHED ASSOCIATIONS AND THE
PUBLIC ABOUT WATER AVAILABILITY, USE AND ALLOCATION
THROUGH *THE WATER FRONT* MAGAZINE**

PROJECT SUMMARY

(a) Organization

The University of Rhode Island Coastal Resources Center/RI Sea Grant (CRC/RISG) will lead this project. CRC/RISG specializes in building constituencies for environmental management initiatives through collaboration and public education. CRC/RISG will work closely with the Education, Outreach and Public Relations Subcommittee of the Rhode Island Water Resources Board's Water Allocation Program Advisory Committee.

(b) Summary Statement

This grant will support the production of a special edition of Rhode Island Sea Grant's newest magazine, *The Water Front*. First launched in 2003 amidst one of the worst droughts in US history, this free publication will be devoted to exploring acute issues surrounding water availability, allocation and impact on the local environment and economy. An online version of the magazine is also planned.

(c) Educational Priority

•**Community issues** – *The Water Front* magazine will be a vehicle to increase public awareness regarding complex water management issues. A primary objective will be to educate the public about proactive and nonregulatory measures that reinforce conservation and help avert water supply crises.

•**Environmental Justice** – Management of the water resources of the state is based on long-range planning for and conservation of the resource, fairness, equitable distribution, and consideration for all human uses.

(d) Delivery Method

The Water Front publication will be distributed through mailings directly to state and municipal officials, including members of the RI General Assembly, water suppliers, watershed associations, major water users, and the public through the Library of Rhode Island Network. Efforts will be made to reach constituencies in the border States of Connecticut and Massachusetts. Announcement of the online version will be done via the Internet and electronic list serves.

(e) Audience

From the suburban landowner on a private well supply to culturally diverse, city dwellers on public supply, the magazine will feature stories that appeal to a wide array of water users.

(f) Costs

This grant request is for approximately \$25,000. The funds will be used to pay for the design and production of a water magazine, including an online version.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

(a) WHY?

Droughts are fast becoming a part of the natural landscape in Rhode Island and neighboring states, yet governments and communities seem unprepared to manage these events. In 1999, and again in 2002, record low rainfall led to widespread concern regarding the integrity of the water supply. In Rhode Island, it became painfully clear that decision-makers were hampered in their ability to promote conservation of water resources due to a lack of relevant information on water supply and use. So as not to confuse the public with mixed messages, more education is needed. It is critical that the public understand the importance of sustaining water resources, the threats to supply—manmade and natural—how development in one community can impact the environment in another, and the complex interrelationships of water and the human element. Awareness is the first step in building a water conservation ethic to mitigate the harsh reality of allocating water.

The purpose of this project is to educate the Rhode Island public about the environmental, economic and social, aspects of water availability and water allocation. Scientific studies carried out by the US Geological Survey and RI Water Resources Board have indicated that demand for water is outstripping supply in some communities. Next to New Jersey, Rhode Island is the most densely populated state in America, marked by predominantly urban development and public water supply in the eastern half of the state and suburban and rural landscapes dependent on private groundwater wells in the western half of the state. An increase in water withdrawals, particularly during drought, is negatively impacting stream flow and wildlife habitat. Growth pressures in rural and suburban Rhode Island will require proactive resource management by businesses, individuals and government.

Community officials have learned that they need to be prepared for foreseeable events likely to cause water shortages, harm the environment or put public health at risk. A new magazine, *The Water Front*, is a tool to increase awareness and knowledge providing decision makers in state government, municipal government and watershed associations with the information needed to support and complement the state's allocation mandate. A public relations strategy will be developed and implemented to promote *The Water Front* and assure that information reaches news outlets in Rhode Island communities and in neighboring states. Potential topics for articles that mirror the work of the Water Allocation Program Advisory Committee (WAPAC) include priority uses of water, water rights, water rates, wastewater considerations, stream flow, out-of-basin transfer, growth management, and water use reporting. Articles will be written to help users understand and appreciate various sides of an issue, make informed decisions based on sound science and take responsible actions.

There are no simple solutions to water allocation; hard decisions will need to be made to balance competing demands for Rhode Island's water while maintaining the environmental integrity of lakes, streams and coastal waters. An informed public is essential. *The Water Front* magazine is designed to make information about water availability and allocation interesting and provocative. For example, CRC/RISG's first issue depicted how a family in Charlestown, Rhode Island coped with a dry well during the summer of 2002. Other articles described the work of a URI

researcher specializing in drought resistant crops, municipal actions to deal with water management during emergencies, and articles on the state's drought management plan. This grant will cover writing and layout of a special edition devoted to water allocation with distribution planned for the spring of 2004. An electronic version of the magazine will debut on the Internet with hyperlinks to a range of topics from science to management. The magazine is necessary because changing attitudes and behavior regarding water use takes time. The long-term plan is to find a sustainable funding source to publish *The Water Front* periodically.

(b) WHO?

This initiative will be conducted mainly by CRC/RISG specialists with expertise in publishing, writing, editing, journalism, and outreach. CRC/RISG has an extensive network of experts within the state, which allows the organization to draw on the knowledge of many professionals. CRC/RISG is a participant on the RI Water Resources Board's WAPAC along with over 140 individuals from the private sector, local nonprofit organizations, water suppliers, academia, and government. (See Appendix A) The Board is charged by the legislature to manage the withdrawal and use of the waters of the state, apportioning it as necessary.

A major goal of the Education Subcommittee is to build a strong constituency for proposed water allocation measures. Input from the Education Subcommittee will be used in the design and selection of articles according to the needs of various users. The intent of the magazine will be to highlight issues that affect various consumers in order to effect responses. All Rhode Island residents have a stake in water—how it is used, at what cost it is available and what restrictions could occur during emergencies. From recreational water lovers to commercial and industrial users, from the scientific community to government and emergency response professionals, the magazine will appeal to a wide variety of constituencies. *The Water Front* magazine will also be available to low income or culturally diverse audiences. A concerted effort will also be made to reach state legislators.

The Education Subcommittee will work with the private sector to identify news channels used by various water users such as trade association newsletters. Both the RI Water Resources Board and CRC/RISG will assist in notification and mailings. The Board will work with the Governor's Office to contact the media, as well as the RI General Assembly. CRC/RISG maintains complete mailing lists for the thirty-nine cities and towns in Rhode Island with contact information for policy makers, planning boards, zoning boards and conservation commissions.

For over two decades, CRC/RISG programs have targeted state and municipal officials as well as watershed associations. Two past initiatives highlight how CRC/RISG works with communities. CRC/RISG facilitated a broad-based stakeholder process to develop a watershed management approach for the state, and then helped with implementation by supporting local watershed organizations. In its Sustainable Communities project, CRC/RISG worked with two regional planning organizations to develop programs for balancing economic development with social equity, environmental protection and quality of life in their communities. The RI Water Resources Board has a long history of working inclusively with many stakeholders.

HOW?

The notion of allocating water is new to Rhode Island. While generic information is available on the topic, educating the public regarding watershed level responses to specific local conditions is in its infancy. Over a period of 6-8 months, CRC/RISG staff will execute various tasks to prepare, publish and distribute the magazine. The editors plan a colorful layout and interesting articles to disseminate emerging scientific findings and water management strategies in an easy-to-read format. Working with the Education Subcommittee and the media, CRC/RISG will prepare feature articles, take pictures, conduct interviews, and design the magazine. Based on responses gleaned from comment cards distributed with the first edition, CRC/RISG anticipates using EPA funds to expand distribution, diversify the target audience and engage public relations expertise.

CRC/RISG will assist the Education Subcommittee in media relations efforts for the year-long water allocation initiative. This includes developing an overarching communications strategy and translating that strategy into specific actions and products to complement the magazine. Partners will work with the media and stakeholders at monthly forums around the state, but especially in communities where watersheds are stressed. The Education Subcommittee will prepare press releases and a short introductory article for inclusion in newsletters for citizens groups and industry associations. The Subcommittee will also pursue the use of public service announcements and water utility bills as other forms of public notification. A technical consultant will be hired to reformat the magazine into a dynamic, interactive document for the Internet. For a detailed accounting of tasks with timeline, see Appendix B.

(c) WITH WHAT?

A color copy of the first edition of *The Water Front* is attached to this proposal as an illustration of the quality and depth of the educational product. The special edition will follow the same format (See Appendix C). By providing an attractive product, readers will be drawn into the magazine and become immersed in its content. Since articles will be prepared by professionals, readers should be moved to think critically about solving local problems and empowered to become involved in environmental and land use decision-making. Ideally, 5000 issues will be printed to maximize reach to the targeted audiences. The online version of the magazine will contain hyperlinks to technical reports issued by the WAPAC. This way, two tiers of readers will be served. The Internet version will also include links to web sites of project partners, particularly URI-CRC/RISG and URI's Cooperative Extension Service which also provides education and outreach services.

PROJECT EVALUATION

The most direct evaluation tool will be "comment cards" distributed with each issue of *The Water Front* magazine. The cards serve as a "feedback loop" to assess the efficacy of various methods of magazine distribution and notification, which geographic regions reach the target audiences, which articles are most read and new subjects to be included. The postage-paid card will list a series of questions such as how readers learned of the magazine, number of stories read and titles, suggestions for future content, user information and general comments. People need only check the appropriate boxes and drop the pre-paid card in the mail. CRC/RISG staff will tabulate the responses and share them with the Education Subcommittee as part of the evaluation process.

The WAPAC Education Subcommittee will interface regularly with the CRC/RISG, members of the media, academia, water users and librarians. Quality assurance in terms of magazine content and quality is built into the process. In addition, because the WAPAC liaisons between many partners and stakeholders, the degree to which the magazine serves as a useful tool for community-based decision making will become apparent through normal programmatic and outreach channels.

Ultimately, the best way to evaluate the magazine is to measure actual outcomes, the most important of which will be a vastly more informed citizenry willing to change water use behaviors. To gauge progress toward objectives, a number of measures will be considered:

- Amount and quality of feedback from magazine recipients and the media
- Amount and type of new articles offered by others
- Number of visits to the web site(s) and/or emails received
- Number of project partners that agree to distribute future editions of the magazine
- Amount of money and in-kind support pledged to produce future editions of the magazine
- Amount of publicity the magazine generates, particularly from out of state or unaffiliated parties
- Number of new contacts wishing to become involved with the water allocation program
- Evidence of decreases in consumption or other conservation action as a result of information gleaned from the magazine

BUDGET

This grant request is for approximately \$25,000. The funds will be used to pay trained professional for the design and production of a water magazine, including an online version. CRC/RISG will receive and administer grant funds on behalf of the Education Subcommittee and other partners. Printing of the magazine will be funded through other means; therefore, costs are not included in this proposal. The RI Water Resources Board has earmarked funds to pay for technical consulting services and staff time (match) for its representatives on the Education Subcommittee. Contractual costs represent best estimates. If the project were funded, consultants would be requested to submit a work scope clarifying all tasks, responsibilities and costs. Partners have been chosen because of their expertise, experience and shared vision.

With state budgets literally frozen, CRC/RISG and other organizations are dependent on federal funding sources such as the EPA to accomplish education objectives. Without these funds, a critical facet of the water allocation program will be missing. The WAPAC's Joint Advocacy & Funding Committee plans purposeful outreach to the RI General Assembly and partners to pay for the printing of the special edition, as well as future editions. For cost details, please see the budget spreadsheet in Appendix D.

Water Allocation Program Advisory Committee

Representative Organizations

Aquidneck Island Planning Com
Atlantic States Rural Water & Wastewater
Audubon Society of RI
Blackstone River Watershed Council
Brown University
City of Newport - Public Works
Conservation Law Foundation
Div. of State Fire Marshall
Eastern RI Conservation District
Environmental Science Services
FEMA - Region 1
Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce
Grow Smart Rhode Island
Irrigation Assoc. of RI
Jamestown Water Division
Kingston Water District
Louis Berger, Inc.
Narragansett Bay Commission
Natural Resources Conservation Service
NE Interstate Water Pollution Control Com
New England Gas Co.
New England Water Works Assn.
North Kingstown Water Dept.
Ocean State Power
Pare Engineering Corp.
Pascoag Utility District
Pawtucket Water Supply Board
Pawtuxet River Authority
Providence Water Supply Board
RI Attorney General's Office
RI Clean Water Finance Agency
RI Coastal Resources Mgt Council
RI Dept of Admin-Statewide Planning
RI Dept. of Admin.- Budget
RI Dept. of Environmental Management
RI Dept. of Health
RI Dept. of Transportation
RI Div of Public Utilities and Carriers
RI Economic Development Corp.
RI Economic Policy Council
RI Emergency Management Agency
RI Farm Bureau

RI Golf Course Superintendents Assoc.
RI House of Representatives
RI Public Expenditure Council
RI Senate
RI State Farm Service Agency Office
RI Water Resources Board
RI Water Works Assn.
RI Wise Use
Roger Williams Univ. School of Law
Save The Bay
The Nature Conservancy
Town of Richmond
Univ. of RI-Coastal Resources Ctr.
Univ. of RI-CRC, Office of Travel
Univ. of RI-Geosciences
US Environmental Protection Agency
US Geological Survey
Westerly Public Works Dept.
Westerly Water Dept.
Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Assn.

TIMELINE

Task	Who	Timing
1. Develop an article list for <i>The Water Front</i> based on input from comment cards (issues 1 and 2) and based on progress and pertinent findings of the Education Subcommittee.	Meg Kerr Monica Allard Sue Kennedy	September, 2003
2. Discuss angles and assign stories	Meg Kerr	October, 2003
3. Background local and regional media outlets	Chip Young	October, 2003
4. Conduct interviews, write articles, shoot photos	Meg Kerr Sue Kennedy Monica Allard	November – January 2004
5. Brief the WAPAC Education Subcommittee and solicit feedback	Chip Young	January 2004
6. Brief state legislators	Chip Young Education Subcommittee	January, 2004
7. Edit magazine	Monica Allard	February, 2004
8. Design and layout magazine	Consultant	March, 2004
9. Convert to electronic online format and compile list serves for distribution	Education Subcommittee	March, 2004
10. Prepare opinion/editorial on water allocation and preview magazine; issue press releases	Chip Young Education Subcommittee	April, 2004
11. Distribute magazine through mail and public libraries	CRC/RISG Education Subcommittee	April 2004
12. Review of comment cards	Meg Kerr	June 2004